

## Update Information for the booklet *“Choosing a Medicare Health Plan”*

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**Please note: Since the printing of this booklet in September 2001, the following changes have been made:**

1. The 2002 Medicare Part B premium is \$54 per month. The 2003 Medicare Part B premium amount will be available by January 1, 2003. This information appears on pages 9 and 22.
2. The information about switching Medicare health plans has changed as follows:

Beginning June 2002, you can leave (disenroll from) a Medicare + Choice Plan at any time for any reason as long as the plan is accepting new members.

If you want to leave your Medicare Managed Care Plan or Medicare Private Fee-for-Service Plan to join a new Medicare health plan other than the Original Medicare Plan, simply enroll in the new plan. You will be disenrolled automatically from your old plan when your new plan coverage begins. You should get a letter from your new plan telling you when your coverage starts.

If you want to leave your Medicare health plan and return to the Original Medicare Plan you can write or call your plan, and tell them you want to disenroll. You can also leave your plan by calling 1-800-MEDICARE and talking to a Customer Service Representative, or by calling the Social Security Administration (SSA). Tell them you want to leave your Medicare health plan. When you leave a plan, you are automatically returned to the Original Medicare Plan, unless you join another Medicare + Choice Plan (if one is available in your area).

3. On pages 32 and 34, the *2001 Guide to Health Insurance for People with Medicare: Choosing a Medigap Policy* was changed to 2002.
4. On page 33, added two new bullets under the header “Finding Out About Other Types of Coverage”:
  - You may be eligible to get health care benefits from the PACE program (Programs of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly). PACE combines medical, social, and long-term care services for frail people. PACE is available only in States that have chosen to offer it under Medicaid.

To find out if you are eligible, to find a PACE site near you, or for more information, call your state medical assistance office. The telephone number for your State is listed in the *Medicare & You* handbook. You can also get information from the Medicare web site at [www.medicare.gov/Nursing/Alternative/PACE.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/Nursing/Alternative/PACE.asp).

- You may be able to get health care coverage from a long-term care insurance policy. Long-term care insurance is sold by private insurance companies and usually covers medical care and non-medical care to help you with your personal care needs, such as bathing, dressing, using the bathroom, and eating. Generally, Medicare does not pay for long-term care.

For more information about the types of long-term, get a free copy of *Choosing Long-Term Care: A Guide for People with Medicare* (CMS Pub. No. 02223), look at [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). Select “Publications.” Or, you can call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For more information about long-term care insurance, get a copy of *A Shopper’s Guide to Long-Term Care Insurance* from either your State insurance department or the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. The telephone number for your State insurance department is listed in the *Medicare & You* handbook. You can also write to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners for a copy at 2301 McGee Street, Suite 800, Kansas City, MO 64108-3600.

5. On page 35, added two new links under [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov):

- Select “Medicare Health Plan Finder” for health plans, and
- Select “Your Medicare Coverage” for health care coverage in the Original Medicare Plan.

This booklet has recently been revised. Changes have been made to the formatting of the information throughout the booklet. The updated version will be available on [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) on the web. Select “Publications.”